

A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, November 11. 1708.

Mad Man. **W**ELL, Mr. Review, now all your Flegmatics are over I hope, and you are clear'd of the Hippo; *Lisle* is taken, and that difficult Affair is over; now I hope, we shall have your Brains crow a little, and you will give us another Hymn to Victory.

Review. Not I, assure you, I am very glad it is taken; and tho' the Emissaries of the Party tell us we have bought it dear, I am sure it would have been dearer to us if we had been forced to raise the Siege, which if the Communication with *Ostend* be cut off, as they say it is, we must have done, or fought our Way thro' an entrenched Army for new Convoys; but I'll tell you a Reason, why I am not so elevated as you expect.

M. What is that pray?

Rev. Why coming into a Country Town in the *Norib*, an honest Country Man that had been at Market comes Home, and having been with his Landlord to pay him his Rent, or some such Business; when he comes back, they ask him what News? —Why, says the honest Man, I don't well know what the News is, but they were talking of one *Lisle* that was taken; pray, who is this Mr. *Lisle*, that there is such great Joy that they have got him? Sure he is some great Body — No Body having gone about to undeceive the poor Man, he goes on, that tho' he found the Folks very joyful for the taking of this Mr. *Lisle*, yet that they were mighty uneasy about a Gentlewoman that had got away, he suppos'd, that they would fain have taken too, one Mrs. *Cittledel*; who

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she was he did not know neither, but she must be some extraordinary Woman, for they were mighty sorry they had not got her, and were afraid they should not ketch her at all—

M. This was a cunning Fellow certainly, and took great Notice of things; but what is the Use you make of this?

Rev. I make a double Use of it. 1. There are some Things in the World, which it is our Happiness not to know, and the Ignorance of the honest, well-meaning, poor Country People in the Politicks and publick Affairs of the World is a great Assistant to their Quiet, and by which if they knew their own Happiness, they enjoy a State the least understood and the most to be desir'd of any Condition of Human Life, *I mean*, an entire Calm and Retirement— But this by the Way. 2. While this *Madam Cittadel* holds out, I must think our Victory incomplete, and therefore cannot yet laugh on both Sides of the Mouth, *as we call it*.

M. Well, but be easie, for our Learned Politicians of the Age, our News-writers tell us, that the Cittadel shall be block'd up, and the Siege being turn'd into a Blockade, they must surrender in a few Days; for they want Provisions, and cannot subsist.

Rev. You in Bedlam may talk after those Gentlemen, if you please; but I must be excused from following them for Abundance of Reasons, and this for one, *Viz.* That they are every Day abusing us with Shams and false Reports of Things.

M. What Particular have you got by the End now, for I know, you have had enough before?

Rev. Every Day enough; but one is worth more especial Observation, *viz.* When that mad Attempt you took Notice of about the French Horse carrying Gun Powder into the Town; what Accounts had we given us of the Numbers that got in? — Some said six Hundred got in, some six Squadrons, which might be 900 Men; others 750; these now were modest Fellows, and spoke something of Probability— Others told us 300; and when it was said six Squadrons, they would have them be Squadrons of but 50 Men in a Squadron; others, that a second Blast near the Barrier of the Town took

them, and but very few got it; now when the Town is surrendred, and they come to march out again, they come to 1700 Men— 'Tis true, a very handson Excuse is made for this, *viz.* That other Troopers are gotten among them; and to excuse this, we are told there was not time to examine it— This is but a coarse Compliment upon the Commissioners of the Allies, and as if the Generals of the Confederates could be so impos'd upon, and would not cause Enquiry to be made, or as if the several Troops of Horse in the City could not be known, I mean, such as belong'd to the Garrison; and if incorporated among the Troops that came in, they should not be known by their different Mounting— The Whole of the Story is, that we were amused by false Reports and Shams of our *Courantiers* and News-Men; and thus we are always used, till Time brings Truth to Light, and then we are ashame of our selves, and quarrel at our People that are employ'd—

M. Well, but can you not believe your Share of Things? —

Rev. Yes I do endeavour to do so, and yet perhaps it is a very hard Task to believe our Share of Things, and no more, when they are told, so as we wish they were true.

M. But on the other hand 'tis a worse Error to be always representeng Things worse than they are, and so to discourage and dishearten our selves and our People.

Rev. 'Tis better than all to know the worst and the best of every Thing, and as we need not enlarge upon the Good, so we need not be afraid of the Bad; it is below the English Nation, and a Scandal both upon their Temper and their Circumstances, to say they cannot bear to have Matters rightly represent'd to them, we ought to know the worst of every Thing, and scorn to have it be said, 'tis necessary to conceal our own Circumstances from us—

M. You are no Politician at all; if you will tell all the Truth, sometimes you would make the People mad.

Rev. Some of them you mean— And such of them, that cannot bear to hear their own Disasters, may go mad; it will be of no ill Consequence to the rest, nor were such

such Wretches of any Use before; the thinking, sedate, judicious Part of Mankind are never discourag'd by Disasters or Difficulties; but if the Necessity of the War be first clear, the Difficulties serve but to quicken, endeavour and confirm Resolution; such may at all times be informed of the worst as safely as of the best of their Circumstances.

M. Why, do you think it is necessary to tell the People, how many Men we lost at the Siege of Lise? Do you think, it would not Discourage Men from Lifting, and dishearten the Regiments that are

marching; and do a thousand ill Turns more in our Politicks?

Rev. Not at all; on the contrary, I think it is absolutely necessary to let all the World know exactly, what we lost— And had I a true List of the Killed and Wounded in every Action, no Command, no Threatning should prevail with me not to publish it for that very Reason, you give for concealing it; if we have lost 20000 Men in the Siege, I would no more conceal it, than I would conceal the Taking the Town now it is surrendered; but of this hereafter.

MISCELLANEA.

I Am in the Course of this Part of the Work, bringing you on to the Affair of Persecution in Scotland; and before I come to give you an Account of the Behaviour of the Episcopal Party to the Church, I think, it may not be amiss to give you some Account of the Behaviour of the Church to them. And tho' the Story may be long, and I know the Temper of our Days does not love to hear a long Tale, yet I must regard the Occasion more than your Humour, and whether you like or no, shall deduce it from the following in the following Manner.

THE Convention of the Estates in their Claim of Right, dated the 7th of April 1689, Declared that Prelacy, and the Superiority of any Office in the Church, above Presbyters, had been a great and unsupportable Grievance to this Nation, and contrary to the Inclination of the Generality of the People ever since the Reformation, they having reformed from Popery by Presbyters, and that therefore Prelacy ought to be abolished.

The Parliament did upon the 22d of June 1689, in Pursuance of the Claim of Right, abolish Prelacy, and all Superiority of any Office in the Church above Presbyters, and rescinded all Acts made in Favours of Episcopacy.

Upon the 25th of April 1690, The Parlia-

ment did appoint and ordain, that all these Presbyterian Ministers then alive, who had been deprived of their Churches, or banished, for not conforming to Prelacy, and not complying with the Courses of these Times, should have forsworn free Access to their Churches, that they might then presently exercise their Ministry in their Parishes without any new Call, and the Privy Council was appointed to see that Act put in Execution.

And upon the 7th Day of June 1690, Presbyterian Church Government is established and declared to be the only Government of this Church, and the Westminster Confession of Faith approved, and appointed to be the publick and avowed Confession of this Church; and all former Acts in Favours of the Presbyterian Church Government are revived, renewed and confirm'd: And it is also declared and declar'd, that the Church Government should be established in the Hands of, and exercized by these Presbyterian Ministers who were ousted, since the 1st Day of January, 1661, for Non-Conforming to Prelacy, and were restored, by the before-mentioned Act, 25 April 1690. And such Ministers and Elders only as they had ordained or received, or should thereafter ordain or receive. And the Parliament intituled a General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as then established, to be held upon the third Thursday of October 1690, and in the mean time, as and while the Church take further Course, The General Mee. 25